

REMARKS

Receipt of the Office Action of August 11, 2004 is gratefully acknowledged.

Regarding the abstract, in the Preliminary Amendment filed on January 31, 2002, an Abstract was included. This same abstract is being submitted herewith in unmarked form as page 8 of the specification.

Regarding the specification, it was amended in the same preliminary amendment to insert the necessary headings and to effect other formal changes.

A further amendment is included herewith to add a description of the drawing now being added to the application.

Regarding the drawing, a sole figure in block diagram form is being submitted herewith as requested by the examiner. No new matter is being introduced into the application as each element of the drawing can be understood from the specification as filed.

The rejection of claims 2-7 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Zicker et al. is noted.

In order to expedite prosecution, claims 7 and 2 have been combined and claims 3-6 are dependent on claim 7 as now amended.

The rejection noted as it applies to claims 2-6 is respectfully traversed.

Zicker et al describes a multi-mode wireless communication system wherein handsets are used as mobile terminals that are capable of being operated in

- a) a standard cellular radio telephone network mode, and
- b) in a so-called enhanced cordless mode, cf. col. 7, line 52 et seq.

Both modes require rather complex switching/controlling processes either in a base station/base station controller of the standard cellular radio network of case a) or within the base station 26 of the pico cell arrangement according to case b).

In contrast, the present invention relies on enhancing an existing local line 10 that is firmly assigned to a central office 12, i.e., enhancing an ordinary telephone line. This inventive enhancement is provided by attaching a radio interface 16a, 16b to an existing network termination circuit 14a, 14b thus enabling the network termination circuit for radio communication instead of i.e., copper wire-based signal transmission with i.e., a telephone connected to the network termination circuit.

The main advantage of this enhancement lies in the fact that an enhanced network termination circuit can—at different times—be used by various subscriber-specific terminals. This is not possible if the network termination circuit is used with e.g., a conventional telephone that is permanently connected to the network termination circuit via copper wires.

Contrary to the teachings of Zicker et al, the present invention does not provide for switching capabilities within the network termination circuit. Zicker et al's solution requires such framework in the form of the pico cell base station 26 for simultaneously handling a plurality of handsets. The present invention relies on the above-mentioned enhancement of the existing network termination circuit(s) on a one-by-one basis. That is, an enhanced network termination circuit having a radio interface 16a, 16b is capable of supporting exactly one subscriber-specific terminal 18 at a time, i.e., by the enhancement with the radio interface 16a, 16b, the existing network termination circuit

is transformed from wire-bound operation to wireless operation. The required switching processes for handling calls etc., are still performed within the central office 10 as with an ordinary telephone wired to a non-enhanced network termination circuit. Therefore, the radio interface 16a,16b may have a simple design for just transforming signals from the local line into wireless signals and vice versa.

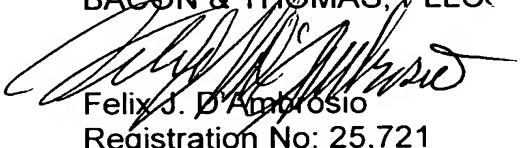
However, each subscriber-specific terminal may be connected to any network termination circuit that becomes available.

Independent claim 7 (amended to include the subject matter of claims 7 and 2) defines a communications network with a network termination circuit assigned to a subscriber-specific terminal for a defined duration. This arrangement does not exist in Zicker et al. Accordingly, Zicker et al cannot anticipate claim 7, or claims 3-6 which depend therefrom.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and re-examination are respectfully requested and claims 3 - 7 found allowable.

Respectfully submitted,
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